

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

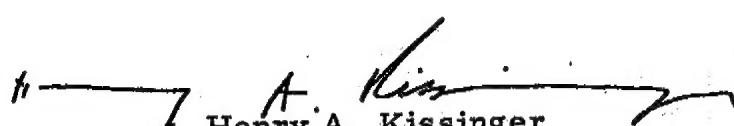
August 3, 1973

Dear Congressman Horton:

Thank you for your letter of July 30. Please be assured that Colonel Christiano and the other men missing in action have not been forgotten. President Nixon is determined that all of them will be accounted for to the degree that is humanly possible. The service of these men and the courage, devotion and sacrifice shown by them and their families, make it clear we can do no less.

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

Best regards,

  
Henry A. Kissinger

The Honorable  
Frank Horton  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C. 20515

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DPMO review completed.

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cc: Mr. Timmons

1334

FRANK HORTON  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE  
34TH DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

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July 30  
1973

Dr. Henry Kissinger  
Special Assistant for National Security Affairs  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Dr. Kissinger:

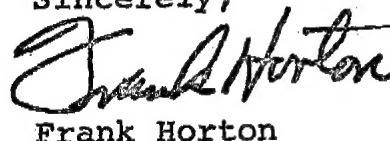
I am writing in regard to Colonel Joseph Christiano who was reported missing in flight over South Vietnam on 24 December 1965. The enclosed copy of the 13 September 1968 statement by Pathet Lao delegate Soth Pethrasi mentions Colonel Christiano as being among 69 captured American airmen downed while bombing regions of Laos controlled by the Pathet Lao.

Colonel Archie Gratch of Randolph Air Force Base reports that he wired a copy of this statement to you in Paris during your recent meeting with Le Duc Tho. Receipt of this telegram has not been confirmed by your office, nor am I aware of any action taken on Colonel Christiano's behalf.

It is my hope that this matter might receive further action during your upcoming visit to Peking. Thank you for your kind assistance.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,



Frank Horton

FH:dh

Monitored from Paris KMA

C132046 PARIS AFP IN ENGLISH 1558 GMT 13 SEP 68 C

(TEXT) VIENTIANE--A LIST OF 71 SEVENTY ONE AMERICAN--69 SIXTYNINE AIRMEN AND TWO CIVILIANS--REPORTED MISSING IN LAOS SINCE 1964 NINETEEN SIXTYFOUR AND POSSIBLY CAPTURED BY THE PATHET LAO WAS SUBMITTED TO THE PATHET LAO REPRESENTATION HERE LAST MONTH BY THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMMITTEE. IT WAS ANNOUNCED HERE TODAY BY SOTH PETHRASI, PATHET LAO DELEGATE HERE.

PAGE 2 RUEOMB 073 UNCLAS

AMONG THE NAMES ARE THOSE OF LIEUTENANT COLONELS DARGEL BLACKBURN JEFFORDS AND JOSEPH CHRISTIANOV REPORTED MISSING ON 24 TWENTY FOUR DECEMBER, 1965 NINETEEN SIXTY FIVE, OSCAR MAUTERER, WHO DISAPPEARED ON 15 FIFTEEN FEBRUARY, 1966 NINETEEN SIXTY SIX, HARDING EUGENE SMITH, 3 THREE JUNE, 1966 NINETEEN SIXTY SIX, AND NORMAN MORGAN 9 NINE JANUARY, 1968 NINETEEN SIXTY EIGHT.

ACCORDING TO SOTH PETHRASI, THESE AND THE OTHER MISSING OFFICERS WERE ABOARD AMERICAN AIRCRAFT SHOT DOWN WHILE BOMBING REGIONS OF LAOS CONTROLLED BY PATHET LAO.

"OUR FORCES HAVE ALREADY SHOT DOWN MORE THAN 800 EIGHT HUNDRED OF THESE AIRCRAFT," SOTH PETHRASI SAID. THEY HAVE CAPTURED SEVERAL DOZEN AMERICAN AIRMEN.

HE CONTINUED: ALTHOUGH WE SHOULD CONSIDER THEM PIRATES AND NOT PRISONERS OF WAR, SINCE THE UNITED STATES HAS NEVER DECLARED WAR ON US. THEY ARE TREATED CORRECTLY. THEY ARE STILL IN LAOS AND OUR FIGHTERS ARE FEEDING THEM WITH THE MEANS AVAILABLE: GLUTINUS RICE AND--WHEN POSSIBLE--FISH AND CHICKEN.

IN HIS POSSESSION HE HAD MORE THAN 100 ONE HUNDRED LETTERS FOR THE PRISONERS TRANSMITTED BY THE RED CROSS.

PAGE 3 RUEOMB 073 UNCLAS

"I SHALL SEND THEM TO THE LIBERATED ZONE AS SOON AS I CAN," HE SAID, BUT IT WILL BE A SIMPLE GESTURE OF HUMANITY ON THE PART OF THE PATHET LAO, WHOM I REPRESENT. WE ARE VICTIMS OF CAMOUFLAGED AMERICAN AGGRESSION AND NOTHING OBLIGES US TO MAKE SUCH A GESTURE."

Col. Archibald Gratch

and go to San Antonio

Gen.